

Structure of Uralic Languages (LING 180)

Spring 2021, TuTh 8:00am-9:35am, Zoom

Prerequisites: LING 101, LING 111/112

INSTRUCTOR **Tom Roberts** (he/him)
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Office Hours: Tuesday, 2:00-3:30pm or by appointment

TEACHING ASST. **Ben Eischens** (he/him)
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Office Hours: Wednesday 1:00-2:00pm

Section schedule

| Section | Day | Time |
|---------|--------|-----------------|
| A | Monday | 1:20pm-2:25pm |
| B | Friday | 10:40am-11:45am |

Important Links (also 'Important Links' under Pages on Canvas)

Removed for privacy

1 Course description

This is a course about the linguistic analysis of Uralic languages, a family of languages including Hungarian, Finnish, Udmurt, Mari, and North Sami, spoken by around 25 million people, primarily in Northern Europe and the northern and western Russian Federation. We will focus in particular on Finnish and Estonian, two closely-related Uralic languages.

The main goals of this course are as follows:

1. To develop the tools and skills to analyze unfamiliar languages with unfamiliar properties and communicate that analysis clearly in writing.
2. To understand the basics of phonology, morphology, and syntax, of Finnish and Estonian, and especially in ways they differ from Indo-European languages like English.

2 Course requirements

Your grade will be determined by weekly problem sets (7 total throughout the quarter), a final squib and participation, weighted as follows:

Weekly(-ish) problem sets (7 total; 70% of total grade)

Most weeks, you will have a written homework assignment, which will be due one week from the day it is assigned. You'll be expected to explain some interesting or challenging data. The lowest grade on an assignment **which you have turned in with a serious attempt** will be dropped.

Assignments will be handed in on Canvas before lecture on the day they are due. **Only pdf files please.** I do not require a specific format for the content of turned-in written assignments: you can choose to structure the assignment as one big essay (Syntax 1-style), or address each problem separately. What matters is that you clearly and explicitly lay out an analysis using reference to specific data, which will inevitably require you to write some prose.

Final squib (20% of total grade)

The final assignment in the class is a squib, which is a short research paper that identifies a theoretically interesting topic and proposes some paths forward towards analyzing it. You will be able to choose from a selection of suggested squib topics, or propose your own using a reference grammar; more guidance will be given on this in Week 5. Included in this is a proposal outlining your proposed squib by Week 7.

Participation (10% of total grade)

Class participation will be evaluated holistically, including a self-evaluation at the end of the course. Participation can come in many forms, such as (non-exhaustively):

- Attending and participating in lecture
- Attending and participating in section
- Coming to office hours
- Collaborating with other students
- Getting involved in course discussions on Canvas (or elsewhere)

The idea is that you should be given credit for participating even in ways that are not necessarily visible to the instructor. What's important is giving as sincere and consistent an effort as possible. That said, it is expected that you always attend lecture and section.

2.1 Final grades

The final grades for the class will be assigned according to the following percentages. For values on the boundary between two grades, I will default to the higher of the two (so 90% is an A-).

| | | | | | |
|----|-------------|----|----------|----|-------------|
| A+ | $\geq 97\%$ | B+ | 87 - 90% | D | 63 - 67% |
| A | 93 - 97% | C+ | 77 - 80% | D- | 60 - 63% |
| A- | 90 - 93% | C | 73 - 77% | F | $\leq 60\%$ |
| B+ | 87 - 90% | C- | 70 - 73% | | |
| B | 83 - 87% | D+ | 67 - 70% | | |

2.2 Late work policy

A maximum of one late homework with no penalty will be accepted from each student, no questions asked, no later than **one week** after the original due date.

That said, I understand that this a stressful and challenging time for many reasons. So if you feel like you need an extension, please let me know (no need to discuss private details) so we can formulate a plan that will work for you. It is preferable that you let me know **in advance** as much as possible if you will not be able to meet a deadline, and barring serious unforeseen circumstances, get in touch before the assignment is due. I am very flexible, but I would like to have that discussion so we can come to an agreement about a reasonable path forward. If you need disability accommodations, see section 4 for instructions.

All that said, it is still worthwhile to try to keep up with the schedule, so you don't have a crunch later on, and so you can get timely feedback on your work.

2.3 Materials

There is no textbook for the course, but we will read several academic articles and excerpts from grammars, which will be made available on Canvas. All lecture slides and recording will also be posted on Canvas the day of the lecture.

3 Collaboration & Academic Integrity

You are highly (highly, highly, highly!) encouraged to work out the solutions to the weekly assignments with other students. However, the solution that you turn in must be written up entirely on your own. This means that, **if you work with other students, you may use their ideas in your work, but not their words.**

When you turn in an assignment, you must:

- at the top of the first page, either: (i) list the names of everybody you worked with, or (ii) if you worked entirely alone, write “No collaborators”
- only submit work which was written up by you alone
- make sure that your work is not copied by any other students

All incidents of suspected academic dishonesty (including copying someone else’s work or allowing them to copy your work) will be pursued and may result in a Report of Academic Misconduct being filed with the student’s provost. This can lead to disciplinary hearings with the Academic Tribunal. More information about these policies can be found here:

https://www.ue.ucsc.edu/academic_misconduct

4 Disability Accommodation

Any student who thinks they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to submit their Accommodation Authorization and discuss specific needs **within the first two weeks of the quarter**. Please contact the Disability Resource Center at 831-459-2089 in room 146 Hahn Student Services or by e-mail at drc@ucsc.edu to coordinate those accommodations.

5 Getting Help

We want to make sure that everyone in the course has access to the resources they need to make it a success. Here are some of those ways:

- **Lecture and Section:** You are always welcome—and in fact, encouraged—to ask questions during lecture and section!
- **Office Hours:** The instructor and TA have designated office hours when any student can drop by. You are strongly encouraged to make use of this opportunity. Possible valid uses of office hours included (but are by no means limited to):
 - Introducing yourself to the instructor
 - Asking specific questions about course material
 - Working through homework quietly and asking questions as needed

If you are not able to attend a regularly-scheduled office hour, you can always make an appointment by email.

- **Email:** You are also more than welcome to ask questions of the instructor or TA over email, and we will respond within 24 hours during the week. Email is best suited for questions which require only a short or limited answer. **Note:** We cannot guarantee a response to an email outside of normal business hours (weekdays 9-5), so keep in mind that last-minute emails the night before an assignment is due are unlikely to get a quick response.

6 Schedule

(subject to revision; updated 5/26/21)

| Week | Date | Topic | Readings/HW |
|------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 (No M section) | 3/30 (Tu) | Introduction & Background | |
| | 4/1 (Th) | Diachronic linguistics overview | Campbell (1998): Ch. 1 |
| 2 | 4/6 (Tu) | Sound change | |
| | 4/8 (Th) | Segmental phonology | HW 1 due |
| 3 | 4/13 (Tu) | Phonotactics and syllable structure | |
| | 4/15 (Th) | Moras & Vowel harmony | HW 2 due |
| 4 | 4/20 (Tu) | Intonation | |
| | 4/22 (Th) | Intro to corpus work | HW 3 due |
| 5 | 4/27 (Tu) | PSRs/X-bar theory 1 | |
| | 4/29 (Th) | X-bar theory 2/Transformations | |
| 6 | 5/4 (Tu) | Clausal structure 2 | |
| | 5/6 (Th) | Negation/Squib Discussion | HW 4 due |
| 7 | 5/11 (Tu) | X' theory 2 | |
| | 5/13 (Th) | Agreement | HW 5 (proposal) due |
| 8 | 5/18 (Tu) | Nominal Concord | |
| | 5/20 (Th) | Intro to Case | HW 6 due |
| 9 (No F section) | 5/25 (Tu) | Case Concord | |
| | 5/27 (Th) | Classes of Case | HW 7 due |
| 10 (No M/F section) | 6/1 (Tu) | Semantics of object Case | |
| | 6/3 (Th) | Open Office hours | |
| Finals | 6/9 (W) | | Final Squib due at 11am PDT |